

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claim 13 without prejudice or disclaimer to the cancelled subject matter.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A method of cutting sheet members, comprising steps of:

a) stacking a plurality of sheet members having air impermeability;

b) fixing the sheet members by vacuum suction;

c) locally heating a seam allowance of pattern pieces, or a region outside the seam allowance, near a cutting line by frictional heat between the sheet members and a knife or a punch of a cutting head, to weld the sheet members together vertically to fix upper and lower sheet members; and

d) cutting the sheet members welded in step c along a predetermined cutting line along the pattern pieces.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of cutting sheet members according to claim 10, wherein the local heating step includes locally heating along a region slightly outside the cutting line at a plurality of positions for each piece.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of cutting sheet members according to claim 10, wherein the local heating step includes locally heating in the seam allowance inside the cutting line at a plurality of positions for each piece.

13. (Cancelled)